

Free Civil/Criminal Query Access to Pacer Service Center Ending Soon

The United States Congress has given the Judicial Conference of the United States, the judicial governing body of the U.S. Federal Courts, authority to impose user fees for electronic access to case information. Beginning July, 2002, all registered agencies or individuals will be charged a user fee for access to civil case records. Access to web based PACER systems will generate a \$.07 per page charge. A similar fee was imposed for Bankruptcy PACER users starting in July, 2001. You will be billed on a quarterly basis for your transactions. You will be allowed to enter a client code of your choosing each time you login to PACER to help facilitate managing the costs.

A measure was approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in March, 2001, stating that no fee is owed until a user accrues more than \$10 worth of charges in a calendar year. Consequently, if an account does not accrue \$10 worth of usage between January 1st and December 31st each year, all balances will be deleted from billing center records. This policy change will be effective for the calendar year of 2002, and statements will not be mailed to PACER users whose accounts do not have a balance due of at least \$10. Once the balance due exceeds \$10, a user will receive a statement by mail which includes the current and previous charges in a calendar year. For billing questions, contact PACER Service Center at 800-676-6856.

Attorneys participating in cases will receive their regular notice of filing e-mail when documents are filed in their case. That e-mail will contain a hyperlink to the document that was filed. Access to this linked document is FREE only the first time it is accessed. The regular charge will be applied to any additional queries of that document. Users are advised to print or save the document to a local computer, in order to avoid these future charges.

Please remember that all ECF users require a valid PACER login and password. Filing attorneys need a PACER account for query functions. If you have not yet registered for the PACER system, fill out one of the registration forms available on the PACER web site. The web site is <http://pacer.psc.uscourts.gov>. Alternatively, you may contact the PACER Service Center for a registration form at (800) 676-6856. Or write them at:

PACER Service Center
P.O. Box 780549
San Antonio, TX 78278-0549

There is no cost for registering. Once the registration form is received by the PACER Service Center, you will receive a login and password in the mail within two weeks. Logins and passwords cannot be faxed, e-mailed, or given over the phone.